(a) whether Government are planning to produce cheap Bio-diesel; and

(b) whether Government are holding discussions with any US company to aid the progress of this work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) The Ministry of Rural Development is the nodal Ministry for the proposed National Mission on Bio-diesel, being set up with a focus on large-scale cultivation of Jatropha. A Detailed Project Report (DPR) on the National Mission on Bio-diesel has been submitted by that Minsitry to the Planning Commission. This proposal *inter alia*, envisages a Demonstration Project involving plantation of Jatropha in 4 lakh hectares of degraded forest and non-forest lands for manufacturing Bio-diesel. The Planning Commission has given 'in principle' approval to the DPR for the demonstration phase, estimated to cost Rs. 1286 crores over a period of 5 years. The Ministry of Rural Development has released Rs. 49 Crores to the nine States, namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Tripura, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan for raising Jatropha seedlings in nurseries.

(b) Ministry of Rural Development have reported that they have not held any discussion with US company.

Oil Exploration in Dholka Oilfiled

3617. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC after conducting tests gave up efforts and declared no crude was available in the Dholka Oilfield near Ingoli village in Ahmedabad district;

(b) if so, how it was that the State-owned Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation successfully recovered crude from the second well in Dholka oilfield;

(c) the amount spent by ONGC to conduct tests for crude oil exploration and

(d) the amount spent by Gujarat Oil Corporation to successfully strike crude oil?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) Oil and Natural Gas Coporation Ltd. (ONGC) had discovered hydrocarbon in the very first well it drilled on Dholka structure in 1966. The field was put on production in 1968. The field was offered in 1992 under small field development round by the Government and awarded to M/s Joshi Technologies (JTI) in 1995. ONGC produced cumulatively 0.15 MMT of Oil and 18-60 MM3 of gas from the Dholka field as on 01.04.1994. The Dholka field operated by M/s Joshi Technologies Ltd. is producing 3.30 Barrels of oil per day.

ONGC has spent Rs. 1187 lakhs on Dholka fields to conduct tests for crude oil exploration.

Crude Oil has also been discovered in the Block CB-ONN-2000/1 awarded under NELP-II to the consortium of GSPC and GAIL. GSPC has made investment of US$ 3.65 MM till 31.3.07 on exploration activities in this Block.

Budget allocation for Indo-Iran gas pipeline project

3618. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US threat to the Indo-Iran pipeline project will be a major setback to India in terms of expenditure on this project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total budget allocated to the Indo-Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project and the amount spent so far;

(d) whether Government have held any discussion with the US regarding this project after sanctions were imposed on Iran; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (e) during visit of US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice to India in March 2005, she informed the media that the US had conveyed its concerns on the proposed gas pipeline cooperation between India and Iran. The US legal position on this issue flows from its Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (IISA) of 1996 that provides